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Title of the proposed thesis

"An Evaluation of Gender Sensitivity in Perceived Stress and Strain of Employees - A Diagnostic Study at New Mangalore Port Trust"

Research Scholar

Rani P.B
Department of Studies in Commerce
Mangalore University - 574199

Research Guide

Prof. P.S. Yadapadithaya
Professor of Commerce
Department of Studies in Commerce
Mangalore University - 574199

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INTRODUCTION

'Work' can be defined as an application of physical or mental effort or activity towards the accomplishment of something, especially in order to earn more income to achieve basic needs and to maintain better lifestyle while fulfilling personal aspirations wants, demands and expectations. Every waking hour of individual's day, his/her life **revolved** around their **work**. So, work is needed for an individual to lead useful and ennobled lives. Mushroom growth of industries, increasing competitive business environment in international market have led the corporate world to face new challenges and problems. To compete at global level, employees have to undergo a lot of mental stress in order to meet the demands of their work, which has become the core of an organization to keep up its existence. So, 'occupation is considered as a main source of stress in peoples' lives for every person. 'Occupational stress' becomes a major issue and matter of concern for the employees and the organization. It has become a crucial topic for the study of organizational behaviour and the practice of human resource management. Occupational stress is closely related to the workplace and organizational performance. **'**Occupational stress**'** can be defined as the **"**harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources or needs of the workers**"**. When the worker feels overwhelmed at work, he/she can lose the confidence and becomes irritable or withdrawn. Stressed workers are increasing their risk of serious physical and mental health problems like headache, backache, anxiety, depression, heart disease and stroke, etc. Stress also leads to other behaviours, such as alcohol/drug abuse, eating disorders, long working hours, aggressive behaviours that can have adverse effects on physical and psychological health and well-being.

The sign of 'workplace stress' is work itself that varies from person to person, depending on the particular situation. The majority of the workers experience stress at some point during their work life. Being stressed, it would be hard for an individual to move with family, friends, co-workers, and society. There is no such a thing as good

stress but some workers find it more tolerable than others. For each person there is a level of stress that helps the person maximize his or her work goals. Work itself can have positive or negative profound effects on employee's contemporary life. It is widely acknowledged that injuries and disease at workplace constitute a moral, legal and economical problem of an individual and organization alike.

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

As per the physical and biological science and behavioural study, the concept of 'stress' meant an intense condition, involving tension, worry and anxiety. Stress is borrowed from the discipline of physics. Stress=pressure, where it means that force placed upon an object to cause damage by bending or breaking. In case of human beings, stress is often used to describe the body's responses to demands placed upon it, whether these demands are favourable or unfavourable. People experienced work pressure due to the unmet expectations which is transformed into disappointment. However, that pressure becomes excessive or otherwise unmanageable, which ultimately leads to stress. Stress is a state and not an illness which reflects certain biochemical reactions in the human body. Mental and physical illnesses develop if stress becomes too excessive and prolonged, and the resultant aggressive mentality turns difficult to cure. Stress in its initial stage may not be as dangerous as perceived but its prolongation causes worry, loss of confidence and determination in life and decline in interest to do work.

STRESS AND STRAIN

Stress is the emotional and physical strain caused by an individual's response to pressure from the outside world. Hans selye (one of the early pioneers of modern stress theory) first employed the term stress in biological context in the 1930s. He referred to stress as an upset in the body's balance due to physical, mental or emotional stimuli. Stimuli or situations that can result in the experience of stress are termed as 'stressors'. Literally, **stressor is a predictor of stress, and strain is a consequence of stress**. The human body has a natural chemical response to a threat or demand known as the 'flight or fight reaction' wherein the body releases adrenaline and once the threat or demand subsides so the body can return to its natural state. The term fight or flight was first

developed by Walter B Cannon in 1915. The fight or flight response, also known as the acute stress response, is an automatic reaction of the body and mind to a stressful and potentially dangerous situation during which the brain reacts quickly by preparing the body for action to keep the person in safe condition. Humans as well as animals react to the acute stress by either fighting the threat or fleeing from it.

Stress can be both positive – eustress and negative - distress aspects. The notion of eustress and distress developed by Hans selye, one of the early pioneers on stress. He supposed that **eustress** occurs when an individual view a situation as slightly pushed but does not get overwhelmed by it. The goal is slightly more than one can handle but not unachievable. This turns the goal challenging, accomplishment of which leads to increased satisfaction and confidence. Eustress turns into a distress if an individual cannot cope with the amount of pressure or trauma he/she is under. Distress refers to harmful unpleasant demands on the individual. It is a negative emotional reaction to the output of stress. Job burnout, substance abuse, violence, depression and anxiety are measures of distress and hope, meaningfulness and manageability are considered as measures of 'eustress'.

Many factors influence the individual's interpretation of threat, response to it and recovery after a threatening experience. Different personality styles, gender difference, age, context, family history, emotional state, understanding of self and general social awareness will all influence each person's stress level. Depending on how long it continues, how powerful they are and how strong the individuals's (his/her) recovery powers are, stress can either be mild or severe, temporary or long term. Stress in **medium or mild or moderate** cases, there may be attention, learning, problem solving and creativity. That can motivate and help to be more productive. At **lower** level, it may show all the signs of boredom, weariness, lack of interest and lethargy. In **severe** cases, there may be worry, loss of interest in life and tendency to do work. However, that can be usually harming **mind** and **body**.

One cannot avoid stress. But it can never be ignored because by ignoring stress it will lead to serious consequences and inviting more medical problems. If it is well managed through coping strategies it will convert ill-being into well-being. "Stress" in occupation is a condition or a feeling experienced when employees are unable to match their knowledge and abilities to the work demand and pressure. Stressful condition in work place can have negative impact on the mental and physical well-being of the

workforce. By and large, stressed workers tend to be fatigued, prone to mistakes and injuries and are more likely to be absent and most significantly, they incur more health-care costs than for other employees and decrease their overall abilities to work productively.

PERCEIVED STRESS

Perceived stress is the feelings or thoughts that an individual has about how much stress he/she is under at a given point in time or over a given time period. McEwen (1998) explained that a controllable amount of perceived stress is in fact healthy and would challenge the individuals to grow. Lazarus (1999) found that stress can be perceived as any form of event that strains an individual's ability to cope with. No one's life is free of stress regardless of how sensible he/she is. However, too high level of perceived stress may influence the functioning of the immune system.

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Sager (1991) defined 'job stress as a psychological state perceived by individuals when faced with demands, constraints, and opportunities that have **important** but **uncertain** outcomes. Similarly, 'job stress' is the outcome of a lack of person-work fit; it is also a subjective cognition that can lead to work-induced emotions such as anger, fear, anxiety, sadness, or disgust **(Lazarus, 1999)**

GENDER DIFFERENCES AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

The perceived differences among and between men and women in the workplace can create different sources of occupational stress for them. According to 'gender role theory' women roles are more distress-inducing. Hence, women experience higher levels of distress than men. Women's gender roles tend to be more nurturing, thus, women typically are in social roles that require them to offer more support to others, to be more considerate, and to widen their concern to a broader range of people in ways that increase stressors, which ultimately lead to distress, whereas men's roles are more instrumental. The theory also emphasizes that differing social locations of men and women, their differing lifestyle behaviours and the differing number, levels of chronic stressors and life events experienced by them contribute to the gender-based health inequalities. Chronic stressors and psychological resources play an important role in

determining health, but their effects are generally stronger for women than men. (Denton, Prus, &Walters, 2004). Women are more distressed over events in the family and men are more affected by work events. Two alternative theories assert that since women simply express themselves differently than men, it creates a false impression that they are experiencing greater distress. According to the response-bias perspective, women express all emotions more freely than men and when questioned about depression and anxiety the women report it more frequently. Similarly, the gender-response theory states that women respond to stress with somewhat different emotions than men, while, men and women may experience similar levels of frustration, but **men tend to get angry at others** and **women tend to get upset with themselves.**

COPING STRATEGY

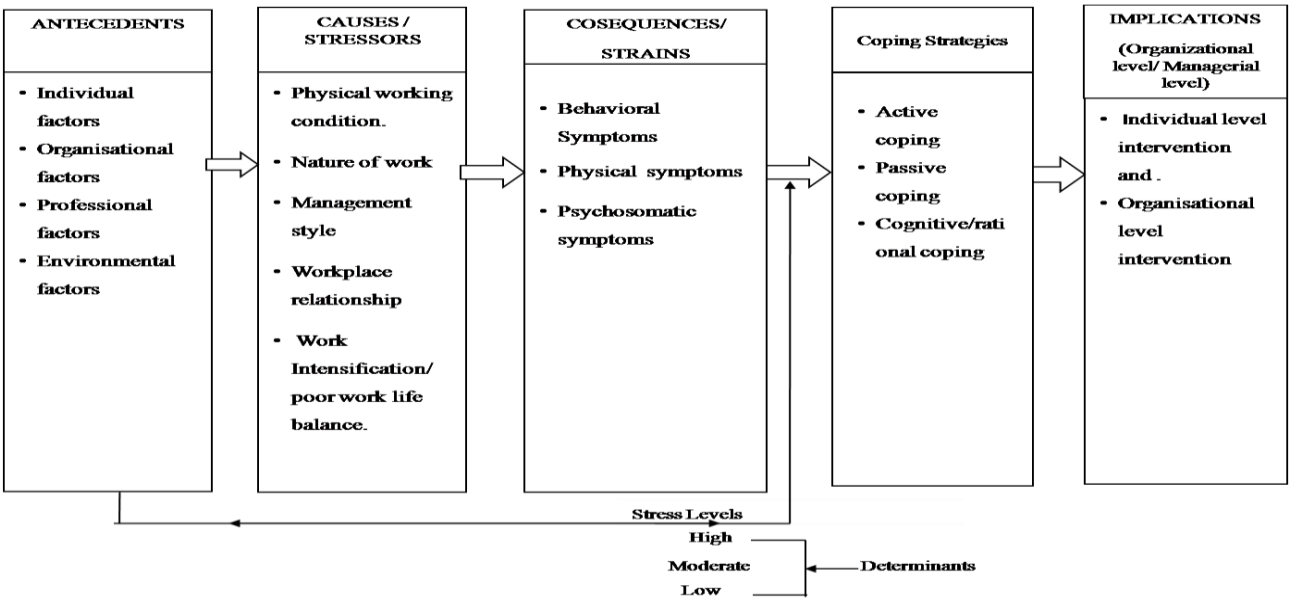
Increasing vulnerability in the workplace causes decreasing power to control the physical and mental condition of the body. When an individual has feeling of decreased power, he is not able to combat with the stressful situation and also difficult for taking positive action to solve the problem. In this awful situation in workplace, coping strategy can immensely benefit and can help the employee to cope with all levels of stress**. Coping or managing stress means keep their stress level under control.** Usually, a stressed worker requires a lot of physical and mental relaxation. Coping with stressful situation is not a simple exercise. However, sometimes they are unable to deal with stressful situation at workplace. They need it in a positive way. The defence mechanism against stress is called **coping** which convert stressful situation into relaxation. That gives them power to maintain a better management of stress level and protect themselves from vulnerability and prevent the impact of stress on the workforce. Coping refers to how an individual deal with stressful situation. There are two major ways of coping - changing **oneself** or changing one's **environment.** The person facing stressful situation **modifies** some aspects of the **situation** or **himself** such as analyzing, recognizing and facing the problem in appropriate manner, being decisive, trusting in self, practicing good management, improving self-image, maintaining better family relationships, using scientific methods to tackle the challenge, acquiring alternate interests, avoiding confrontation, acquiring more qualifications,

using better communication, etc., in order to achieve a more adequate 'person-environment fit'. It can be said that the best way to manage stress is to **prevent** it. Selye's own writings concluded, **"Stress, in addition to being itself, was also the cause of itself, and the result of itself."**

Definition

Stress is natural health hazard of liveliness both by definition and realization. The term "stress" is defined by various authors in different ways depending upon their period of study and nature of investigation.

Conceptual Framework Guiding the Present Research Study (Road)



Source: Based on earlier studies

As shown in the above figure the present study "**An Evaluation of Gender Sensitivity in Perceived Stress and Strain of Employees - A Diagnostic Study at New Mangalore Port Trust"** focuses on the concepts and the process of stress and strain experienced by the male and female employees, examining various sources /antecedents, causes of stress to the employees at the work, and among other things such as consequences of stress perceived by the employees as well as coping strategies adapted by them to manage /control their stress level. Further, organisational implications for nurturing employees' health and well-being of the organisation will also be highlighted.

The stress antecedents are come from individual, organisational, professional, emotional factors. All these factors lead to large number of stressors. Stressors or causes of stress stemming from both internal and external resources. Internal causes of stress include physical working condition, nature of work, management style, workplace relationship and work intensification or poor work life balance and external causes of stress such as life changes relationship difficulties etc which significantly contribute to various harmful experiences and symptoms for virtually all humans.

Consequence of stress is the interaction between individual responses with environment. Consequence of stress may be of emotional manifestation. Feeling of undefined anxiety, fear and frustration. Symptoms may include physical, behavioural, cognitive and emotional symptoms. Examples of physical symptoms are aches and pain, nausea, dizziness frequent cold etc. Behavioural symptoms include sleeping disorders procrastinating or neglecting responsibility, nervous habits and so on. Memory problem inability to concentrate, poor judgement and constant worrying are the examples of cognitive symptoms and emotional symptoms consists of moodiness, irritability or short temper, agitation and inability to relax.

Stressed individual adopts different way of dealing with it. They cannot remain continual state of tension. Coping involves problem focused, emotional focused, and appraisal focused and occupational focused strategies. **Problem focused strategies** are direct towards reducing or eliminating a stressor or causes of problem. This includes finding one's more information about the issue, learning new skills to manage it, or evaluating the pros & cons of the alternatives. **Emotional focused strategies** are directed towards reducing or preventing one's own emotional reaction. These strategies include managing feeling by finding methods of release or distraction. Such as seeking social support or using relaxation techniques. Appraisal focused strategies are directed towards challenging one's own assumptions an d identifying the way one thinks, this may include distancing oneself from the problem or challenge, altering goals and values or identifying the humour in the situation to bring a positive sign.

Both organisation and individual are highly concerned about stress and its effects. Implementing on effective management of stress requires individual level and organisational level intervention. Individual intervention level may include progressive muscular relaxation technique, biofeedback technique, and training in specific area. Physical health programmes etc. Organisational intervention such as redesign jobs to be

more fulfilling, empower employees through participation and implement organisation development programmes.

Employees need to evaluate the levels of stress in their organisation, inspire their workforce and mobilise resources to maintain a health enhancing working environment that encourages and stimulates productivity.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Occupational stress is becoming a major a contributor to 'health and performance problem' of individuals and its unnecessary occurrences lead to huge expenses for organizations. The manner in which a person copes with stressful events and the extent to which managing the causes of stress at workplace has been identified as crucial factor, which can prevent or eliminate the impact of stress in workforce. Several studies exist on this topic carried out in India and abroad by scholars, academicians and organizations. This is an attempt to review the literature of previous research work in relevant to the present study. Review presents some important and relevant studies on occupational stress, gender sensitivity and coping strategies among employees were presented under the following categories: occupational stress in general, gender sensitivity in perceived stress and strain of employees in particular.

Barling, J. *et al.*, (1984), in their research on "Work stressors, gender differences and psychosomatic health problems**"** focused on the association and role conflict for the participants (91 men and 56 women) in the survey, who had full-time employment and had at least one dependent child. The study assessed the extent to which job involvement, job satisfaction and role conflict/strain could predict individual health of men and women differently and found that there was a significant difference for men and women in their experience of the role conflict/health relationship, while the job dissatisfaction/health relationship did not differ significantly. Women reported considerably more psychosomatic health symptoms and complaints than men. However, women had more job satisfaction than men and men were involved more with their work than women.

Jick, T.D. *et al.*, (1985), in their study entitled **"**Sex Differences in Work Stress**"** found that while men are more prone to severe physical illness, women tend to report higher rates of psychological distress. Findings also suggest that women are socialized to assess stressful events in a less confident manner than men, whereas men experience more cognitively-based pressures and stressors as a result of their socialization.

Lennon, M.C., (1987), in his research work "Sex Differences in Distress: The Impact of Gender and Work Roles" focused on a potential source of gender differences in distress that has received relatively little attention. The data was taken from the National Centre of Health Statistics' Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (HANES I), a national multistage probability survey conducted between 1971 and 1975 and was based on 3464 employed men and women across the United States. This study adopted a structural conception of gender role and considered those social roles that had been allocated differentially either to men or to women as traditional gender roles. Non-traditional roles for a gender group are those generally associated with the other gender. This research work focuses on a potential source of gender differences in distress the workplace, that has received relatively little attention and considers the extent to which work conditions and the sexual segregation of occupations are related to demoralization, which is more prevalent among women, and drinking, which is more prevalent among men. Multiple regression analyses indicate that the only work-related factors associated with demoralization are substantive complexity and full-time work, and these have an effect among women only. Full-time work and low levels of complexity are associated with higher levels of demoralization among women. Substantive complexity is also associated with drinking, but only among men; as complexity declines, levels of drinking increase. The findings in this study indicated that the importance of considering work-related factors and measures of distress associated differentially with gender when investigating gender differences in distress.

Hurst, T.E. *et al.*, (1997), conducted a study on sample of 244 correctional officers (167 men and 77 women) working in Kentucky medium security institutions for male offenders. The Maslach burnout inventory used to measure severe occupational stress. Results from statistical analysis revealed that correctional officers experience high levels of stress. But the study did not specify gender differences in relation to emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. The study indicated that female officers more often

than male officers deal with stress by seeking social support. However, male officers more often than female officers processed stress by "planful problem solving."

Gianakos, I. (2000), "Gender Roles and Coping with Work Stress**"** This study aimed to examine the gender roles on managing with stressors at workplace among 176 adult undergraduate students (130 females, 46 males) who were employed alongside attending college. The study found that both feminine and masculine persons employed significantly greater use of positive-thinking coping styles than the undifferentiated persons and feminine persons used direct action significantly more than undifferentiated persons. Androgynous persons were significantly more likely to use help-seeking, direct action, and positive-thinking coping mechanisms than those individuals with undifferentiated gender roles. No gender-role differences were found among individuals' who used escape-related coping mechanisms. Regression analyses revealed that while biological gender was a significant predictor of direct action coping, femininity and masculinity scores were significant predictors of control-related coping styles.

Miller, K. *et al.*, (2000), conducted a cross-cultural study on occupational stress and with an objective to examine the relations of gender and cross-cultural perspective in managers' experiences of work stress. The samples were collected on sources of occupational stress (stressors), coping and consequences of occupational stress (strains) from male and female managers from four countries - South Africa, the United Kingdom, United States of America and Taiwan. The study revealed significant results for the interaction between country and gender on any of the measures. When the entire sample was studied, there were virtually no differences in sources of work stress, but there were differences in the consequences of work stress for managers from both the genders.

Matud, M.P. (2003), in his study "Gender differences in stress and coping styles**"** examined the data collected from 2816 people (1566 women and1250 men) in the age group 18 and 65 years, with different socio-demographic features. The results of MANCOVA suggested that the women scored considerably higher than the men in chronic stress and minor daily stressors. The women viewed their life events as more negative and less controllable than the men despite having no difference in the number

of life events experienced in the previous two year. Gender differences were found in 14 of the 31 items listed in the survey, with the women sighting family and health related events more frequently than the men while the men in turn listed relationship, finance and work-related events. On the emotional and avoidance coping styles, the women scored considerably higher than the men and on rational and detachment coping, their score was lower. The men were found to have more emotional inhibition than the women. Finally, on somatic symptoms and psychological distress the women scored significantly higher than the men. Even though the effect sizes are low, the study indicates that women are more vulnerable to stress than men and their coping style is more emotion-focused compared to the men.

Gyllensten, K. *et.al.*, (2005), in their study **"**The role of gender in workplace stress: A critical literature review**"** found that women experienced higher levels of stress than men. However, several studies reported no difference between the genders. The study also indicates that the evidence for the adverse effects of multiple roles, lack of career progress and discrimination and stereotyping was varying.

P.de Smet *et al*., (2005), studied Gender and regional differences in perceived job stress by collecting samples total 34,972 subjects aged 35–59 years (23,553 men and 11,419 women) from eight centres across six countries across Europe. As per their study, adjusting for age, education and occupational groups, women perceived marginally more psychological job demand than men. However, for job control, gender-based differences seemed to be larger as men perceived higher control at work than women. The deficit of job control in females, however, increased towards less qualified occupations (univariate). The study found thatjob strain was less prevalent in men than women, without apparent regional heterogeneity. It was also noted that some DC models showed that women tended to report more stress symptoms than men, both in univariate and multivariate analysis. Their study implies that gender-based inequalities appeared to vary between regions of Europe, but regional differences emerged when controlling for occupation. Obviously, this does not exclude the existence of differences in perceived job stress associated with a truly

different cultural attitude towards work at a higher than task level.

Nag, A., *et al.*, (2008), in their study entitled "Gender Differences, Work Stressors and Musculoskeletal Disorders in Weaving Industries "identified the work stressors among male and female weavers in powerloom and handloom and examined the association of work stressors with the prevalence of work related musculo-skeletal disorders (MSDs). In India, powerloom and handloom industries are the second largest economic sector and employs 6.5 million in handloom and 4.75 million weavers in the powerloom, of which, 65% of the workforce are women. The survey was conducted among 516 participants, both male and female, from the weaving industry in Ahmadabad. Assessment was made on physical and psychosocial stresses of work, job diagnostics, hazards of workplace, working environment and the prevalence of MSDs. The study found that there is a high prevalence of MSDs among weavers. Women workers in powerloom and handloom were more susceptible to developing MSDs in upper back and lower back. About 84% females in powerloom and 48% males in handloom experienced poor job satisfaction, with positive association to developing MSDs in any of the four body regions. Male weavers were more likely to develop pain in the knee, and hand. Approximately two-third of the weavers (60–65%) complained of experiencing general chronic fatigue which was less among the male folks in handloom sector (29%).MSDs occurrence among males was largely due to job dis-satisfaction in handloom and cognitive anxiety in both powerloom and handloom. Lack of task clarity and poor job feedback also influenced the development of MSDs among males in handlooms. Mental overload was a major factor on the occurrence of MSDs among male and females in handloom. MSDs among female weavers had no significant impact from the higher social and domestic disruptions. As per the multivariate analysis, major contributors to occurrence of MSDs amongst powerloom weavers were job duration of more than 10 years, manual material handling , and poor machinery safety and among the handloom weavers the contributors were- age above 25 year, poor machinery design, mental overload, skill requirement to perform jobs had significant influence in the occurrence of pain. Noisy workplace, work schedules, mental overload work methods and tools, postural constraints and skill acquisition caused more stress for male weavers in powerloom as compared to the female weavers, who identified demand of job specialization, workplace designs, and dusty work

environment as considerably stressful. In handloom, job autonomy, dusty work environment, workplace designs, task situations, manual material handling and job specialization were identified as more stressful for male weavers and noisy work environment and auxiliary support were perceived as more stressful by the females.

Alexander-Stamatios Antoniou *et al.* (2008), "A Qualitative Study Investigating Gender Differences in Primary Work Stressors and Levels of Job Satisfaction in Greek Junior Hospital Doctors" intended to identify similarities and differences in major sources of occupational stress and levels of job satisfaction, and the extent to which these may be related to male and female hospital Doctors. The study included 32 male and 28 female Greek hospital doctors who provided information through semi-structured, in depth interviews. Narrative analysis, a qualitative research technique, was used to analyze and categorize the data. Gender appeared to hold an important role in the lives of JHDs and was interrelated with stress and job dissatisfaction. The data analysis made it evident that the majority of the JHDs considered their profession to be the most stressful, with high levels of job dissatisfaction reported by many participants. A number of similarities were sighted between male and female JHDs', with the concern about the present and the future professional prospects and being unemployed for long periods of time constituted a major source of occupational stress. Female JHDs felt that the lack of appreciation for their work by patients and their relatives, problematic work situations, balancing the work and home life and the lack of appropriate hospital facilities were the main sources of stress. While male JHDs did not worry about problems at their work and appeared to be more satisfied with their jobs than females, described bureaucratic procedures in the hospital, being constantly in need of information about new medical developments and excessive job demands as extremely stressful. However, when asked if they were interested in attending a stress management programme, out of the 19 JHDs who answered positively, 12 were female and only 7 were male and majority of them replied that they had no time to attend such a programme, stating that they were not willing to "spend additional time." The study concludes with a suggestion for possible introduction of in-house stress management training programmes, both at a generic, and gender-specific level and future research aimed at increasing the individuals' coping mechanisms, and identifying environmental sources of stress

Nayak, J. (2008), in her research study titled "Factors Influencing Stress and Coping Strategies Among the Degree College Teachers of Dharwad City, Karnataka" aimed to identify stressors, the level of stress and coping strategies adopted by the teachers of degree colleges of Dharwad city. Data was obtained by random sampling method from 200 teachers (100 males and 100 females) from the selected degree colleges. The teachers reported that they experienced stress always caused by role stressors, interpersonal stressors, personal development stressors, organizational climate stressors. The experience of stress was also because, as revealed by them during interview, they were basically lazy persons and were happy with fewer responsibilities. Gender-wise it was evident that higher per cent of both male and female teachers adopted watching T.V., talking to closed ones, performing religious activities, exercising and yoga, listening to music, taking rest, setting priorities and walking, positive thinking, recreation with family as stress reducing techniques mostly in their daily living.

Claudia S. e*t al.* (2009), in their study entitled" Job strain and other work conditions: relationships with psychological distress among civil servants in Rio De Janeiro, Brazil**"** examined the relationship between job strain and other work characteristics with psychological distress and using cross-sectional data from an occupational group, estimated the contextual effects of different working environments on psychological distress. Data was obtained from 3,574 non-faculty civil servants working at university campuses in Rio de Janeiro. The research revealed that Job strain and poor support at work were important psychological stressors in the workplace in Brazil. The psychological distress was linked with low social support at work and high job strain after adjusting with demographic factors like age, education, income and other work characteristics. The association was stronger in men than in women for low social support. Similarly, high job strain was significant in both women and men. Men who were assigned with routine non-manual work presented 29% more psychological distress than those undertaking professional roles. There was no significant association with night shift work and psychological distress. As per the multilevel analysis, the frequency of psychological distress did not vary significantly.

M. C. Gadinger *et al.*, (2009), in their study "Gender moderates the health-effects of job strain in managers" examined the cross-sectional association between main, interactive and gender –dependent effects of the demand-control-support (DCS) Model and subjective health in managers. They surveyed 424 German, Austrian and Swiss managers and found that

- The health-related effect of the psychological work environment is moderated by gender in managers.
- In the understanding of female managers' adverse health perceptions, the gender –dependent effects of the DCS model may play a vital role.
- . Increasing social support for female managers may help to overcome gender inequalities in management positions.
- More psychosomatic grievances are experienced by female managers working in high demand, low control, and low support situations compared to their male counterparts. It is also noted that while male managers may benefit equally from social support and job control, women experience a higher cushioning effect from social support as compared to job control.

Abu Sadat Nurullah (2010), in his research study titled "Gender Differences in Distress: The Mediating Influence of Life Stressors and Psychological Resources**"** explores gender differences in distress and the mediating influence of life stressors (i.e., chronic stress, work stress, negative life events, and childhood and adulthood trauma), and psychological resources (self-esteem, mastery, and sense of coherence) using the data from Canadian National Population Health Survey (NPHS), Cycle 1. Results from t-test analyses showed that females reported more psychological distress, chronic stress, work stress, negative life events, and childhood and adulthood trauma, compared to males. However, male participants reported having more self-esteem, mastery, and sense of coherence in terms of psychological resources. The findings from regression analyses indicated that life stressors and psychological resources are mediating factors influencing gender differences in distress, controlling for other socio-demographic and psychological variables.

Yu- chi wu *et al.*, (2010), studied the effects of gender role on perceived job stress and in order to ensure that the empirical results relate to a same job environment, only bank clerks in Taiwan were chosen as participants. The result reveals that when the work environment is unchanged, employees associated with high levels of masculine traits reported lower perceptions of job-related stress than the employees associated with high levels of feminine traits while there was a minimal difference between male and female bank clerks perceived job stress scores. This occurrence was due to the criteria (i.e., job stress) in this study was work-related psychological stress; hence, the relationship between gender role (a psychological construct) and job stress (work-related psychological stress) is more significant than the relationship between sex role (a biological construct) and job stress (work-related psychological stress). This finding implies that for job stress (work-related psychological stress) studying, gender role (a psychological construct) could be a more suitable construct than sex role (a biological construct) that can be used to explore the relationship with job stress.

Ana Sliskovic, *et al.*, (2011), "Work Stress among University Teachers: Gender and Position Differences" The researchers examined exposure to stress at work among university teachers. The study focused mainly on the degree of the perceived presence of specific stressors at work among men and women and different job positions. The study hypothesized that women would be more exposed to stress due to the traditional gender roles in society and competitive work environment. It also hypothesized that employees at lower positions - assistants in particular, would be exposed to higher stress at work than assistant professors, associate and full professors due to job insecurity and reduced possibility of control. The study was conducted online and measured six groups of stressors: workload, material and technical conditions at work, relationships with colleagues at work, work with students, work organisation, and social recognition and status included through a representative sample of 1,168 teachers (both men and women) employed at universities in Croatia. One-way analysis of variance followed by Turkey HSD post-hoc tests were used to examine the positional differences in the assessment of exposure to stressors and student's t-test was used to examine the gender differences. The study found that women on average experienced greater stress at work. Besides unfavourable social recognition and status, workload was a significantly stronger stressor for women in all positions than men except for full time professors. The assessment of interpersonal relationships for associate professors

and assistant professors also found significant gender differences. Furthermore, for women, exposure to unfavourable material and technical conditions was higher than the male assistants. The study also noticed the stress free nature of the occupation of academics has transformed into stressful one due to the focus on the quantity of work rather than its quality, and, the working conditions at universities are becoming similar to those of other professions. The increasing pressure on university teachers, which is a result of a change in the policy and social status of higher education in recent years, has been confirmed by many authors.

Ryland, E. *et al.* (2011), in their study "occupational stress and the gender gap: an issue of control?" Surveyed gender differences in reported stress levels among 245 employees. Further, they examined occupational stress and desire for control among both the genders in the same positions. The result indicated that women reported considerably higher levels of work stress than men. Occupational stress was strongly and positively related to desire for control for the women, while, there was no such relationship was found for men. Since control is known to have a strong moderation effect on stress levels, their study implies that unmet desire for control was responsible for at least some of the work stress expressed by women. The study makes an argument that a missing coping factor-that of control over their working environment was the reason behind some of the high levels of work stress reported by today's women.

Bahador Keshvari and Matrebi Abdulrani (2012), carried out a research on the "Effect of Gender Differences on Occupational Stress among Engineering Workshop Trainees". Total of 120 non-smokers (60 males and 60 Females) were taken as participants. The researchers studied the participants' heart rate reactivity and mental performance in non-stressful (baseline) and stressful situation. The findings indicated that gender differences clearly influenced heart rate reactivity and mental task in base-line and stressful situation. Findings also showed that the effect of stress on mental performance is more significant in women than men. However, men adapted faster than women in stress situation. The Result of mental task further indicated that stress lead to decreased mental efficiency in women in relation to the men.

Stafyla, A., *et.al* (2013), in their study "Gender differences in work stress, related to organizational conflicts and organizational constrains: An empirical research" intended

to study the gender differences every way that stress is witnessed in the workplace. Relevant data was collected from 231 Greek adults (94 were male and 137 were female) employed at various workplaces. An independent-samples t-test was conducted for the analysis of the result to compare men and women and it was found that male participants proved to experience higher levels of stress in the field of interpersonal conflicts with their colleagues. Further, the result analysis showed that, in comparison with women, men have higher levels of stress related to organizational constrains, due to the incorrect instructions they receive, the lack of supplies and specific information necessary for their work performance, and the interruptions of their colleagues as the most stressful conditions.

Yahaya, L.A. *et al.* (1996), studied stress and coping strategies adopted by employees in selected banks in five Nigerian cities. Questionnaires were administered to 200 employees and responses were received from 170 employees. Relevant data was collected through stress and coping strategies Questionnaire (SCSQ) (Developed by research) including 45 items clustered into five areas of job stresses, and two coping strategies. The area for measuring stress included work schedule, relationship with other staff, job security, private life and relationship with customer. The two areas of coping strategies are combative and preventive behaviour. The responses were gathered on the basis of sex (male and female) and marital status (single and married) The results revealed that male and female bankers were not significantly different in stress experiences, but there was significant differences found with respect to marital status(single or married). The significant differences of coping strategies were found between male and female and married and single respondents. Results from t-test reveal that male banker was found to have more stress coping strategy than female banker.

Nabila *et al.* (1998), examined the hypotheses regarding the "main buffering effects of emotional support on job and health-related strains among Israeli social workers.The findings of the study discussed in terms of the hypotheses revealed that the presence of the emotional support from co-workers and supervisor would be negatively correlated with burnout and job related strain. and positively associated with job satisfaction. Further, as regard the moderator hypotheses the author reported emotional support from supervisor and co-workers significantly moderate effects of job stress and health-related strain and job satisfaction

Johannes L.P. Naude (2006), "Work-related well-being of emergency workers in Gauteng". The objective of this study was to assess the relationships between occupational stress, sense of coherence, and burnout and work engagement of emergency workers in Gauteng and to determine whether sense of coherence moderates the effects of occupational stress on burnout and work engagement. The Maslach Burnout Inventory – Human Services Survey, the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, the Emergency Worker Stress Inventory and the Orientation to Life Questionnaire was administered 325 workers. Evidently, the study observed:

- Emotional Exhaustion is positively and significantly related to Depersonalization, Lack of Job Resources and Job Demands/Pressure.
- Emotional Exhaustion and Depersonalisation are significantly and negatively related to Work Engagement, and Sense of Coherence.
- Personal Accomplishment was positively and significantly related to Work Engagement and Sense of Coherence.
- And Work Engagement was significantly positively related to Sense of Coherence.

The results showed that occupational stress and a weak sense of coherence predicted emotional exhaustion and depersonalization. Sense of coherence is observed as a broadband resource, whereas, burnout and low work engagement as a result of lack of resource .However, the study not find moderate effect between sense of coherence and occupational stress on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, personal accomplishment or work engagement.

Nina poloskivokic *et al.*, (2007), "Individual differences and occupational stress perceived: a Croatian survey." The aim of the study was to identify the occupational stress levels among different categories of employees working in different enterprises in Croatia and to study and analyze stress in that country in relation to individual differences viz., gender, age, marital status, parenthood, number of children, hierarchical level, department, and working hours. The study found that employees aged above 50 years with three or more children who are working in marketing, in middle management level or in procurement division experienced highest level of stress whereas younger employees with one child and who are working in HR, finance

and production experienced lowest level of stress. The study reveals that while there is a connection between age, marital status, parenthood, number of children and hierarchical level, and the way stress is perceived, there is no connection between department, working hours and the gender.

Mohd Zukri *et al. (*2010), in their paper "A Study of Occupational Stress and Coping Strategies among Correctional Officers in Kedah, Malaysia"investigate the effect of occupational stress among correctional officers of a prison located at Kedah. Data was collected through randomized stratified sampling method. Analysis of data revealed the prevalence of stress among nearly half of correctional officers. Socio demographic factors - marital status, promotion factor, age, monthly salary, duration of service and number of children, Family and marriage aspect such as pressure from relatives, clean up house, sexual frustration, conflict with spouse, conflict with children, conflict due to household work and professional factors such as excessive workload, working after work hours, not enough staff, disgraced words from fellow workers, competition in carrier development and excessive work were the causes of work related stressors. Coping strategies commonly used by the officers to reduce stress symptoms were positive reframing and emotional support.

BusharaBano and Rajiv Kumar Jha (2012), "Organizational Role Stress Among Public and Private Sector Employees: A Comparative Study" The study conduct a survey on 182 public and 120 private sector employees in Uttar Pradesh. Result from t-test and ANOVA test found that the moderate level of stress among both public and private sector employees. There is no significant difference found in relation to role stress among public and private sector employees.

Smith, K. L., (2012), in his article entitled "Coping Mechanisms and Level of Occupational Stress among Agriculture Teachers and Other Teaching Populations.**"** examined the levels of occupational stress and coping mechanisms among Utah secondary agriculture and non-agriculture teachers. 115 respondents from each group were interviewed using the WAYS questionnaire and SPSS 20 technique was used to analyze the data. The result shows that agriculture teachers reported higher level of occupational stress than non-agriculture teachers and occupational stress came from different sources for the two teaching groups. Preference for specific coping

mechanisms was correlated to length of teaching career, age, type of teaching certification, and hours spent on teaching and teaching related tasks.

Reddy, L. *et.al.*, (2012), in their article entitled "Occupational Stress and Professional Burnout of University Teachers in South India**"** conducted to examine the occupational stress and the professional burnout among university teachers. The data was obtained from 9 state universities in Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh and was analyzing using descriptive statistics, Spearman's correlation and multiple regressions. The results found that majority (74%) of the university teachers are experiencing moderate and high levels of occupational stress due to organizational structure and climate, personal and professional efficiency, intra and interpersonal interactions, environmental factors. About 86 percent of teachers experienced professional burnout due to emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment indicating occupational stress was strongly and positively related professional burnout.

Loo-See Beh (2012), "Job Stress and Coping Mechanisms among Nursing Staff in Public Health Services." The purpose of this study was to investigate the main causes and effects of job stress and coping mechanism among nurses in public health services in Malaysia. The study found that the major causes of work stress were related to nursing issues like heavy workload, repetitive work, poor working environment, interpersonal relationships and dealing with hospital administration. Social support was viewed as a buffer against the dysfunctional consequences of stress stemming from the workplace. Based on scenarios, situations and level of job stress, the respondents found to have been adopting more than one coping mechanisms to combat job stress.

Dwamena, **M.A. (2012**), studied the research on "The stress and its effect on employees' productivity: A case study of Ghana ports and harbours authority, Takoradi.**"** The study was conducted at Ghana Port and Harbours Authority (GPHA) Takoradi to evaluate stress and its effect on employees' productivity. Purposive and simple random sample technique was used for selecting the sample size and the required data was obtained from 100 employees. The study reveals that majority of the employees displayed Type A personality traits and negative factors such as work under pressure, uncaring organizational environment, lack of participation in decision making, lack of control over their jobs, ambiguity in role distressed them and had a

negative impact on their productivity. Due to the work-related frustrations they experienced, young and highly competitive employees were in danger of experiencing burning out due to which most of them contemplated leaving their job. The study suggests an employee assistance programme to be introduced for early identification and intervention to deal with stress and increase the productivity level of the employees.

Stafyla, A. *et.al* (2013), in their study on "Gender differences in work stress, related to organizational conflicts and organizational constrains: An empirical research"intended to study the gender differences every way that stress is witnessed in the workplace. Relevant data was collected from 231 Greek adults (94 were male and 137 were female) employed at various workplaces. An independent-samples t-test was conducted for the analysis of the result to compare men and women and it was found that male participants proved to experience higher levels of stress in the field of interpersonal conflicts with their colleagues. Further, the result analysis showed that, in comparison with women, men have higher levels of stress related to organizational constrains, due to the incorrect instructions they receive, the lack of supplies and specific information necessary for their work performance, and the interruptions of their colleagues as the most stressful conditions.

M. Drabek, and D. Merecz (2013), in their study on "Job Stress, Occupational Position And Gender As Factors Differentiating Workplace Bullying Experience" aimed to find out whether an employee's gender, his/her occupational position and level of occupational stress are related to bullying experience. A total of 1313 employee of a transport company were contacted to collect the data required for the study and the relationships between gender, occupational position, the level of stress and bullying were analyzed. MDM Questionnaire was used to measure bullying, while Subjective Assessment of Work Questionnaire was used to assess the work environment. The study found that women were generally more exposed to bullying than men. Women experienced more bullying by their colleagues than men did in particular (bullying by colleagues that destroys the worker's image and bullying by colleagues that destroys social relations). Individuals with managerial jobs experienced overall bullying, bullying by colleagues and bullying by colleagues that destroys social relations more often than the individuals with non-management positions. The results of the study also

indicated that employees with higher level of stress in comparison with less stressed co-workers reported more incidents of bullying behaviour, bullying by colleagues, bullying by supervisor or all these types of behaviour.

Nada Ismail *et al.*, (2014), "Organizational Factors. Associated with occupational Stress among Lecturers in Community colleges, Peninsular Malaysia". The study observed that, decision latitude, psychological job demand, social support and job insecurity were organizational factors of occupational stress among lecturers. Findings revealed that occupational stress experienced by lecturer is originates from the organizational factors not from other factors. The study found significant relationship between organizational factors and occupational stress, but no significant relationship found between occupational stress and socio-demography factors (i.e. age marital status, education, experience).

Rao, S.G., *et al*., (2014), in their study entitled "Stress Management and Performance Status of Employees of Public and Private Banks" made an attempt to analyse the level of occupational stress and performance level among public and private sector bank employees. This research study deals with 587 respondents, 300 from public and 287 from private sector banks. Factors such as inter-role distance, role expectation conflict and role overload expressed were indicated as causes of stress by the employees of private sector banks, whereas, Public sector bank employees showed disagreement towards all the factors causing stress. However, the researchers observed that the stress levels in both public and private sector bank employees were similar and employees generally were satisfied with their work cultures and achievements.

SUMMARY OF REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND RESEARCH GAP

An attempt is made to critically review the literature of the past research work relevant to the present study**.** This review reveals some important, relevant Indian and Foreign studies conducted with regard to gender differences, occupational stress and psychosomatic health problems among academicians, nurses, MNC employees, police officers, bank managers, public and private sector employees, human resources employees, correctional officers, doctors, weaving industry employees, government and non-government employees, engineering workshop trainees, Social-worker,

occupational stress and strain among male and female employees of other professions. Reviews on relationship between emotional support on job and health related strain among employees, relationship between age and gender on occupational stress among teaching fraternity, gender differences on the work-related stress and coping process of workers in various professions. Moreover, the earlier studies done by various researchers have demonstrated various factors of role-oriented aspects of stress such as career uncertainties, work and family interpersonal relationship etc, no research has been conducted on the issue of GENDER SENSITIVITY IN PERCEIVED STRESS AND STRAIN OF EMPLOYEES, which is the need of hour. Hence, this research study tries to fill this research gap by addressing the content of "**AN EVALUATION OF GENDER SENSITIVITY IN PERCEIVED STRESS AND STRAIN OF EMPLOYEES - A DIAGONSTIC STUDY AT NEW MANGLORE PORT TRUST"** and seeks to contribute to an understanding of the gender differences and occupational stress and strain among Employees of New Mangalore Port Trust, Dakshina Kannada District.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Occupational stress has developed as a critical issue in the workplace, as work stress has negative impact on their health, work performance and their behaviour in the organization. Earlier research on the topic has showed that job stress is quite different from stress, as well as it is work related psychological stress. It may occur when an individual is not given adequate training or is not provided with necessary resources to perform the job or is confronted with conflicting job demand (Jamal1990). In the modern industrial society employees stress is the growing problem of most of the organization. Work stress factors such as work-overloads, downsizing, overtime, shift work and unhealthy work environment, are great impact on employees well-being. Workers are key source of organization and all organizational activities mainly depend on them. The productivity of the organisation decreases and the health care cost increases due to the stressed employee. It is alarmingly known that thousands of healthy workers are dying because of overwork and exhaustion that kills the workers in prime stage of their lives. So, It is necessary that organization should identify the problems related to work stress and should utilize appropriate strategies to reduce employees job stress.

Both male and female employees experience work stress on the basis of nature of work

and their job involvement. But comparatively female worker tend to experience more stress than their male counterparts as they are basically performing double roles most of the time. One of the recent studies found that 25percent of working women and 18percent of working men experience work stress at their work place. Work stress is not confined to a particular organization, person, or profession. Work stress among the employees is a common issue throughout the world. New Mangalore Port Trust employees are no exception to this phenomenon. In the light of these problems the present study of **"AN EVALUATION OF GENDER SENSITIVITY IN PERCEIVED STRESS AND STRAIN OF EMPLOYEES -A DIAGONOSTIC STUDY AT NEW MANGALORE PORT TRUST",** has been proposed to investigate the impact of job stress experienced by New Mangalore Port Trust employees. And identify the perceived level of job stress among both male and female employees and find a solution to some of the work-related stress which has effect on their personal and organizational well-being.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The present research study intends to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the different types and levels of stresses and strains experienced by the employees of New Mangalore Port Trust?
2. What are the different types of causes (stressors), consequences (strains) of employees stress and coping strategies to manage stress in NMPT?
3. What are the key determinants of perceived levels of stress and strains among employees in NMPT? Is there any difference in the perception of stress related causes, consequences, and coping strategies between males and females?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The central purpose of proposed study is to measure and assess the stress and strains experienced by men and women employees and also understand their coping strategies to manage stress in New Mangalore Port Trust. The specific objectives of study are:

1. To measure and assess the nature and extent of stress and strains experienced by employees in NMPT:
2. To analyse and discuss the major causes (stressors) and consequences (strains) of stress in between and among men and women in NMPT:

3. .To highlight the major coping strategies adopted by the employees to manage stress NMPT:
4. To identify and discuss the key determinants of employee stress and strains in NMPT: and
5. To raise important organisational and managerial implications for effectively and efficiently managing stress in an organisation.

HYPOTHESES

Based on the objectives and intensive review of literature the following four hypotheses have been framed for further investigation in this study:

1 There is significant difference by gender, age, marital. Status, occupational position between male and female employees in New Mangalore Port Trust

2. There exists significance difference in source of stresses and strains between and among male and female employees. 3. Women are more likely to experience different types, levels of stresses and strains than their male counterparts.

4. There exist significant differences in the methods, strategies and process of coping with excessive stress between men and women employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The proposed research study is partly descriptive and partly diagnostic in nature. For the purpose of this study the researcher will use primary data and information in a large extent. However, the secondary source of data such as books, periodical and reports, framework and also for conducting comprehensive review of literature pertaining to the current field of investigation. This qualitative-empirical research study will be carried out in New Mangalore Port Trust. Mangalore, Karnataka.

The primary data and information collected through a pre-tested comprehensive structure questionnaire to be personally administered by the researcher to the respondents. a stratified disproportionate random sampling technique will be used for the purpose of fairly and adequately representing the entire workforce of NMPT. Questionnaire will be administered to the respondents during their non-working hours. The questionnaire will consist of three parts: The first part of the questionnaire will consist of question relating to the respondents personal and family characteristic. The second part of questionnaire will be devoted to the respondents working profile. The last part of the questionnaire will deal with nature and extent of stress and strains

experienced by the respondents, the major antecedents/causes of stress, stress-related consequences and coping strategies adopted by them. Appropriate statistical tools and techniques used for the purpose of analyzing and interpreting the survey data.

SAMPLING FRAME

Division-Wise, Class-wise and Gender-wise Classification of full time Employees in New Mangalore Port Trust as on 31-03-2016.

Sl. No	Division	Class I			Class II			Class III			Class IV			Total		
		M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
1.	Administrative	8	3	11	5	3	8	26	19	45	5	3	8	44	28	72
2.	Chief Engineer (Civil)	15	1	16	20	2	22	30	10	40	2	7	9	67	20	87
3.	Chief Mechanical Engineer	19	0	**19**	15	2	**17**	82	8	**90**	8	1	**9**	124	11	**135**
4.	Deputy Conservator	9	0	9	18	1	19	155	7	162	37	1	38	219	9	228
5.	Finance	8	3	11	7	4	11	41	21	62	1	2	3	57	30	87
6.	Medical	2	1	3	0	1	1	17	8	25	2	2	4	21	12	33
7.	Traffic	7	1	8	7	2	9	42	6	48	2	0	2	58	9	67
8.	**Total**	**68**	**9**	**77**	**72**	**15**	**81**	**393**	**79**	**472**	**57**	**16**	**73**	**590**	**110**	**709**

Source: Internal document of NMPT

The employees of New Mangalore Port trust have classified into four categories namely: class I, class II, class III, and class IV. And the employees are distributed in seven divisions such as administrative, civil, and mechanical, deputy conservator finance, traffic and medical. Division Wise, Class wise and Gender wise Classification of full time Employees distribution of the sample respondents in the above table shows that out of total number of 1849 employees, temporary employees(730)and cargo handling workers(410) account for 1140 (61.65%) remaining 38.35% are regular employees of New Mangalore Port Trust. For the purpose of research study, the relevant data and information collected the respondent employee for NMPT. Hence, the sampling frame consists of 709 employees. The proposed research study will employ disproportion random stratified technique.

The stratification done based on three variables; division/department, category/class of employees and gender. It is intended to elicit the view and perceptions about the stress and strain from at least 50 percent of the employees including the sampling frame (355).

Sampling frame of employees at New Mangalore Port Trust as on 31-03-2016.

Particular	No. of employees
Total size of workforce at New Mangalore Port Trust	1849
Less: 410 = Cargo handling workers 730 = Temporary workers	1140
Sampling frame	709

Source: Internal document of NMPT

Scope and Limitations of the study

The scope of present study is confined only to the work stress among and between male and female employees in New Mangalore Port Trust, organisation. The study mainly focused on understanding the work life, key determinants, and comparative analysis of the stresses and strains of the employees. Hence, it is a micro study too. Nevertheless, the proposed study also has limitations. Regular or permanent employees are the potential respondents in this present study. As such,contingent workers including part time employees, outsourced subcontractors, temporary employees, and cargo handling workers will be kept outside the purview of the study.

CHAPTER SCHEME

The present research study titled "**An Evaluation of Gender Sensitivity in Perceived Stress and Strain of Employees - A Diagnostic Study at New Mangalore Port Trust"** is co-ordinate in seven chapters as proposed below:

Chapter-I: "Introduction" will present an overview of the subject matter of the research study by clearly detailing the review of literature the conceptual framework, statement of research problem, and research questions, objectives, and hypotheses, in addition, sources and methods used for the collection of data, scope and limitations of the study and chapter classifications are also given in this chapter.

Chapter-II theoretical framework; will highlight the various critical aspects theories pertaining to the domain of employee stress and strains.

Chapter III New Mangalore Port Trust: A profile: will present a thumb-nail sketch of various aspects related to the New Mangalore Port Trust, such as vision mission values, organisation structure, and profile of the workforce.

Chapter IV stress and strain of employees: key determinants: will identify the major factors responsible for perceiving different types and levels of stress and strains.

Chapter V: Employees stresses and strains: measurement and assessment: will deal with the various aspects relating to the measurement of different kinds and levels of employee stresses and strains.

Chapter VI: Employee stresses and strains; coping strategies; will discuss the various coping strategies adapted by the employees to manage different kinds and levels of stresses and strains.

Chapter VII: Summary and conclusion: presents a capsule summary of the major results and discussions presented in earlier chapter. Finally, the chapter concludes by providing the direction future research in this field.

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